Borough of Nelson.

Medical Officer's

REPORT

FOR 1902.

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NELSON,

20th FEBRUARY, 1903.

To the Chairman and Members of the Health Committee.

GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour of presenting you my Annual Report on the health and sanitary condition of the Borough. I first give the record of the births and deaths which occurred during the year. I find 794 births (401 males 393 females) were registered, which gives an annual birth-rate of 24 per 1,000 of the population. The deaths registered, including premature births (20) and inquest cases (12) numbered 373 (195 males 178 males) which gives an annual death-rate of 11·3 per 1,000.

The deaths of children under one year including premature births totalled 87, which gives a death-rate of 10·9 per cent; calculated on the number born during the year, excluding premature births, the rate is 8·4 per cent.

The following table epitomises the ages at which death occurred :—

Deaths under 1 year	87	146 deaths under 5 years.
,, of 1 year and under 5 years ...	59	
,, 5 years ,, 15 ,, ...	32	227 deaths over 5 years.
,, 15 ,, ,, 25 ,, ...	22	
,, 25 ,, ,, 65 ,, ...	118	
,, 65 years and over	55	

I enclose a detailed list of the causes of death, and the ages at which they died.

Under the "Notification of Infectious Diseases Act" there have been reported 269 cases of Scarlet Fever, 26 Enteric Fever, 28 Diphtheria, 1 Membranous Croup, 26 Erysipelas and 130 Small Pox. In the Enteric cases closed buckets with disinfectants for the reception of the excreta were supplied and regularly removed to the Refuse Destructor.

I think you will agree with me that the year 1902 has been an eventful one, but not of the most pleasant character. We have not only had epidemics of Scarlet Fever and Measles, but a very severe visitation of that loathsome disease Small Pox, so severe, that from the 19th February to the 28th May, 77 cases were reported. The accommodation at our temporary Small Pox Hospital was soon inadequate, but the Committee rose to the occasion and with all dispatch had two corrugated-iron Hospitals ready for use. The only real safeguards—vaccination and re-vaccination—were offered to and accepted by great numbers, and soon there was a marked diminution in the number of fresh cases, in fact, by the middle of July, we hoped the epidemic was over, having no fresh case from the 28th May. These hopes were soon dispelled, for on the 19th August three cases were reported from one house, on the 11th September (23 days after) another case was reported from a different part of the town, another on the 16th and one on the 18th. We then found that a concealed case in a barber's shop had been propagating the contagion.

I have already reported this fully to you, and also sent two special reports to the Local Government Board and to the County Medical Officer of Health. From the 19th August to the 14th November we had 52 cases, then a lull of six weeks, then on the 28th December another case was reported, making 53 cases in the second outbreak.

We had 130 cases during the year, 77 in the first outbreak and 53 in the second. You have already had a tabulated statement of the 77, giving the vaccinated and unvaccinated. Of the 53 in the second outbreak, 28 were adults and had been vaccinated in infancy, (none re-vaccinated). The disease, with one or two exceptions was

of a mild type. The others were unvaccinated, and the disease was severe in type, there being no fewer than Nine confluent cases amongt them. It is pleasant to be able to say none had a fatal issue. At first, as I have already said, we were short of Hospital accommodation, but when that want was supplied, every case was at once removed there, and as far as possible all contacts re-vaccinated, houses fumigated, clothing disinfected, and every precaution possible used to prevent the spread of the contagion. Accommodation has been provided for the isolation of families during the disinfection of their own houses after the removal of an inmate to the hospital.

When Dr. Fletcher, the Local Government Board Inspector was visiting the neighbouring towns he gave us a visit, and I think he felt quite satisfied with our Hospital accommodation and the steps the Health Committee were taking. At the end of the year, there were only five cases remaining in the Hospital.

Out of the 269 cases of Scarlet Fever, we have had only twelve deaths, showing the disease was of a mild type.

The death-rate for the first quarter of the year was 12·9, for the second quarter, 11·1, for the third quarter, 9·6, and for the fourth quarter, 12·2. I have no serious accidents or fires to report.

Mr. Priestley, (Health Superintendent) has kindly condensed for me some details of the work done in the Sanitary department.

NUISANCES.—246 Complaints of Nuisances have been received and investigated. Abatement of same has in most cases been secured by an intimation to the persons responsible, but 130 Statutory Notices have been served dealing with the following matters :—

126 Defective Sink Waste Pipes.
29 Ashpits without proper Doors and Coverings.
26 Water Closets blocked.
26 Defective Rain Water Pipes.
14 Water Closets without proper flush.
10 Defective Drains.

6 Houses without sufficient privy accommodation.
2 Smoke Nuisances.
2 Defective flagging in yards.
1 Accumulation of Manure.

MILL CLOSETS.—A special report dealing with the privy accommodation at Mills has been presented to the Committee, and alterations have been required in 101 cases

UNSOUND FOOD.—3 cwts of beef and 14 lbs of fish have been seized and destroyed, but no legal proceedings have been instituted.

SLAUGHTER HOUSES.—There are 19 private Slaughter Houses in the Borough, one new license having been granted.

COMMON LODGING HOUSE.—There is still only one Common Lodging House in the Borough, and this continues to be well conducted, and it is satisfactory to note that during the course of the Small Pox outbreak no case has occurred there.

OFFENSIVE TRADES.—No new or offensive trade has been established during the year, nor application made for any.

SCAVENGING.—Scavenging and Cleansing are carried out by the Corporation staff. All ashes and refuse are burned at the Destructor, which continues to work well. During the year, 6,139 loads of ashes, 3,876 tubs of garbage, 153 loads of Market refuse and 3,677 loads of light refuse, giving a total weight of 6,621 tons 10 cwts 2 qrs. have been destroyed. 1,146 miles of streets have been swept during the year.

WORKSHOPS.—Owing to the Small Pox epidemic, the Sanitary staff have been very fully employed in coping with the outbreak, and the inspection of Workshops has not been fully completed, but the work of inspection and preparation of the register is now proceeding.

INFECTIOUS DISEASE AND DISINFECTION.—Negotiations with Colne Borough as to a Joint Infectious Hospital are in progress. A portable steam Disinfector has been purchased to meet the exigencies of the Small Pox outbreak, and has been freely used. Sanction for borrowing powers for a permanent Disinfecting Station has now been received. Tenders have been obtained and the work of erecting same will soon be in hand.

LEGAL PROCEEDINGS.—Two Summonses have been issued for failure to notify cases of Small Pox, and fines of 20/- and costs and 10/- have been imposed. One case of exposing infected clothing was also fined 10/-.

Mr.Ball (Borough Engineer) kindly informs me that during the year, plans have been approved for the erection of 163 houses in addition to shops and other classes of buildings, while exactly 100 houses have actually been completed and certified as fit for habitation. At the end of the year the empty houses numbered 89, a decrease of 43 since Christmas, 1901, which gives a total annual increase of 143, and taking the inhabitants at an average of 4·7 per house, an increased population of 672.

The paving of 21 Streets has been completed at a cost of £9,180, and notices have been issued for the Paving of 33 more, at an estimated cost of £8,845.

The Tramways in Manchester Road which were in course of re-construction a year ago have been completed, and were opened in March, and the Light Raiways in Leeds Road and Scotland Road are well in hand. In connection with the latter, the shopkeepers requested the Council to replace the granite paving with lava setts, which has been done, and is giving great satisfaction. At the Sewage Works, a Percolating Bacteria Bed, 100 feet in diameter and 7 feet deep is being constructed, which will be capable of dealing with 350,000 gallons of Sewage per day, and will to that extent relieve the existing filters which are now overworked.

Although we had such a wet summer, it is surprising to know that the rainfall for the year was 2·84 inches less than in the preceding year, or about 10 inches below normal.

January	2·72
February	1·15
March	2·12
April	2·01
May	2·58
June	1·18
July	2·48
August	3·13
September	·88
October	3·95
November	2·03
December	2·52
TOTAL	26·75

I am pleased to say the quantity and quality of the water supply has been well maintained during the year.

Mr. Hartley (Water Manager) kindly informs me that satisfactory progress has been made with the construction of the new Reservoirs in the Pendle Valley. The second reservoir in the Black Moss Valley, with a capacity of 80,000,000 gallons has been completed, and we hope to be able to give the full quantity of compensation water from this Valley, leaving the Ogden Valley for domestic and other purposes. The first Reservoir in the Ogden Valley should be completed this year, and will increase our storage capacity by 50,000,000 gallons, which will for a considerable time ensure consumers within our water limits, a good and plentiful supply of pure water.

I remain, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

A. P. MILLAR.

Causes of Death in Nelson at different ages for the year ending Dec. 31st, 1902.

Ages at Death.	Under—1		Under—5		Total under 5		5 and under 15		15 and under 25		25 and under 65		65 and over		Total of 5 years and upwards	
Causes of Death. SEXES	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Smallpox	..	1	..	..	..	1	1	2	..	..	3	..	..	..	4	2
Measles	1	2	7	2	8	4	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Scarlet Fever	..	..	2	2	2	2	3	4	..	..	1	..	..	..	4	4
Whooping Cough	4	2	2	5	6	7	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Diphtheria & Memb. Croup	..	..	3	2	3	2	3	2	..	..	..	1	..	..	3	3
Croup	..	..	..	1	..	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..
Fever — Typhus	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Fever — Enteric	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	..	1	..	3	..
Fever — Other continued	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Epidemic Influenza	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Cholera	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Plague	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Diarrhœa	..	1	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1	..
Enteritus	4	1	2	..	6	1	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1	..
Puerperal Fever	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Erysipelas	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Other Septic Diseases	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Phthisis	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	4	6	8	7	..	..	12	14
Other Tubercular Diseases	..	..	3	..	3	..	1	2	..	..	5	1	..	..	6	3
Cancer, malignant disease	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	7	2	3	3	10
Bronchitis	6	3	4	5	10	8	..	1	..	1	4	9	3	10	7	21
Pneumonia	2	1	5	3	7	4	1	..	..	..	1	2	1	1	3	3
Pleurisy	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	1	..	1	1
Other diseases of Respiratory Organs	1	..	1	..	2	..	..	1	..	..	2	1	..	..	2	2
Alcoholism—Cirrhosis of Liver	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	1	1	1
Venereal Diseases	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Premature Birth	12	8	..	..	12	8	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Diseases and Accidents of parturition	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	2
Heart Diseases	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1	2	7	10	4	3	12	16
Inquest cases — Accidents	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	3	..
Inquest cases — Suicides	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1	..
Inquest cases — Natural Causes	1	..	1	..	2	..	..	..	1	..	1	2	1	1	3	3
Old Age	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3	2	3	2
Brain Disease	1	1	..	3	1	4	1	..	..	1	4	12	6	7	11	20
Rheumatic Fever	..	..	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1
Infantile Complaints	22	8	1	1	23	9	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
All other causes	3	2	3	..	6	2	2	2	4	1	9	10	3	2	18	15
All Causes	57	30	35	24	92	54	15	17	10	12	53	65	25	30	103	124